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ABSTRACT

This handbook includes numerous activities to help teachers discuss prejudice and discrimination, and to help elementary students create an environment in which all people can develop to their full potential. Each activity aims to raise children's level of awareness, understanding, and tolerance of differences. In order to make this handbook relevant and timely, interviews were conducted with 101 children and 20 Utah teachers to determine which issues regarding prejudice might be of particular import. Findings from these interviews are discussed. Activities are organized into chapters corresponding to the following categories: (1) learning about prejudice; (2) disabilities; (3) race and ethnic differences; (4) appearance; (5) religion; (6) family and lifestyle; (7) gender; and (8) combatting prejudice and discrimination through books that can be read by children. Each chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses aspects of the particular prejudice. The second discusses what teachers can do, and the third describes individual classroom activities. A list of references is included. (PS)

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"Teacher, they called me a_____!"

Prejudice and Discrimination in the Classroom

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Utah State Office of Education
The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

"Teacher, they called me a _____!"

Prejudice and Discrimination in the Classroom

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Schooling that is consonant with democratic principles should actively teach and promote such basic concepts as freedom, equality, and individual rights and responsibilities. Children must learn to understand their rights, the rights of others, and concern for the well-being and dignity of all.

One of the greatest deterrents to these democratic goals is prejudice; preconceived ideas, usually based on stereotypes about those who are different, be it due to race, religion, culture, gender, disabilities, appearance or social status. These prejudices are the basis of negative attitudes and often of discriminatory actions. Adults in American society like to believe children are immune to prejudice. Our culture celebrates the innocence of childhood; children are believed to be somehow morally quarantined from the corrosive nature of such a pervasive social problem as prejudice. Yet, the basis for prejudice is laid at an early age, prior even to children starting school.

Teachers can take an important step in reducing the formation and growth of prejudicial attitudes by challenging many of the stereotypes to which children are exposed. In our schools, we need to discuss prejudice and discrimination and help our students create an environment in which all people can develop to their full potential. This handbook includes numerous activities to help teachers accomplish these goals. Each activity has a broad aim: to raise children's level of awareness, understanding, and tolerance of differences. More specifically, it is hoped that children will:

1. Understand certain concepts such as prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping.
2. Examine their own and other people's treatment of people who are different.
3. Be better able to analyze and reflect upon their own feelings, thereby differentiating reasonable dislikes or caution from prejudice.
4. Gain in their awareness and enjoyment of diversity in our society.
5. Act in ways that are nondiscriminatory.

In order to make this handbook relevant and timely, interviews were conducted with 101 children and 20 Utah teachers to determine what issues regarding prejudice might be of particular importance to address. Before discussing the results of these interviews, a few suggestions on how best to use

this handbook are in order. First, you may not want to move consecutively through the activities presented. Except for Chapters Two and Nine, each chapter addresses a different topic and the order of use should be based on your understanding of your students' needs. However, some activities from Chapter 2, "Understanding Prejudice," may serve as good groundwork for activities included in other chapters. Also, many of the books listed in Chapter 9 may be helpful in addressing issues from the topical chapters.

Second, the activities are written for elementary students in general, and, consequently, not all activities may be appropriate for all grade levels. Certain activities are only appropriate for more cognitively sophisticated children, others are more appropriate for kindergarten and primary grade children. In many cases adaptations may be made in the language to adjust the activity to your students' level. The decision as to whether a specific activity is appropriate for your class has been left for you to make; your decisions, of course, should be based on your students' level of cognitive and language development, and your understanding of their needs.

Third, whenever we ask children to express opinions or feelings, an element of risk is involved for both us and our students. An atmosphere of warmth, trust, and nonjudgment is crucial when asking children to share personal impressions and viewpoints. It might also be wise to apprise your principal and the parents of your students of what you are doing, and perhaps ask for their cooperation and assistance.

Lastly, make sure you allow enough time for discussion at the end of each activity. It is important that children have the opportunity to "debrief" so they are not left with possible unresolved feelings and misunderstandings.

If we cherish democracy, we have a responsibility to communicate this to our children by working against the early formation of attitudes that are in direct conflict with democratic principles. Elementary school is not too early to address issues such as prejudice and discrimination. In fact, children's views of the world are not as rigidly held compared to the views of adolescents (Shiman, 1979). Younger children are relatively more open to new experiences and change. Change is not easy, but through our efforts we can teach children to work toward a society in which there is justice for all.

The Study

Two research assistants and I interviewed a total of 101 (52 male, 49 female) randomly selected elementary school children in a rural area and in a suburban area in Utah. There were 34 first graders, 34 third graders, and 33 fifth graders included in the study. Half the children attend school in a rural community. The other half attend school in a suburban Salt Lake City community. Only six of the children in the study were members of racial or ethnic minority groups.

The third and fifth grade children were individually asked to respond to questions about their knowledge of what it means to be an American; about their views of different ethnic, racial, and religious groups; about how they learned about each specific group; and about whether or not they knew anyone who belonged to the minority group being discussed. They were also asked questions concerning about what children tease each other and why some children are excluded from play.

The first graders were shown ten pictures, one male and one female child from five different racial or ethnic groups (Black American, Mexican American, American Indian, Asian American, and Anglo American). The first graders

were then asked with which child they would most like to play. The chosen picture was then removed and the child was asked to select the picture of the person with whom he or she would now most like to play. This continued until all pictures but one had been selected. First graders were also shown collages of the different ethnic and racial groups and were asked about what each group of children might be teased. They were also asked questions to ascertain their knowledge of religious groups. In addition, first grade students were asked questions concerning about what children in general tease each other.

Twenty teachers from three different schools (one rural, two suburban) were also interviewed. Teachers participating in the study discussed their views of children's attitudes toward people different from themselves, activities they had found useful in encouraging children to be tolerant of differences, and topics they would like to see included in a handbook on prejudice.

The comments made by children and by the participating teachers were used to assist the author and her associates in designing this handbook on prejudice for elementary school teachers. The following findings were particularly important in the planning of this handbook, and may be of interest to the readers.

Interviews with First Graders

1. The most prevalent form of teasing that was spontaneously reported by first graders was being called "stupid," "dummy," or "mental." Examples of children's comments are:

"They called you stupid."

"They push you in the snow and call you dummy."

2. When first graders were asked if children are teased about the way they look, 85% said yes. The most frequent example given was that of weight, followed by clothes, hair, and then skin color. Examples of children's comments are:

"You're fat."

"They call you names like weirdo, and chubby cheeks."

"Your clothes are stupid."

"You look ugly, and if they're Negro, they call them nigger."

3. When asked if children are teased about what church they attend, 71% of the first graders said yes. Some examples of children's comments are:

"Your church looks dumb."

"You go to the Catholic Church, and I don't. Cause I'm Mormon and I'm better than you."

"You go to a different church than I do. It hurts your feelings."

"Kids say that your church is bad. That the things they say aren't true."

4. Interestingly, although children reported frequent teasing about church membership, 76% of the children could not give one correct name of a religion or faith. Only 18% of the children gave the correct name of one church. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (or the Mormons) was the most frequently named religion. Six percent of the children were able to give the name of two religions. Forty-four percent of the children could name a specific church, but not a religious denomination (e.g., 13th Ward, 2nd Ward).

5. When shown pictures of Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, Black Americans, American Indians, and Anglo Americans, children could quite readily expound upon why and how individuals from the various groups were

teased or excluded. Responses most frequently dealt with skin color, hair, and eyes.

6. When asked to choose the children with which they would most like to play, the tendency was for males to choose Anglo males first and for females to choose Anglo females first. Males and females tended to choose all the ethnic or racial children of their own gender before they would choose anyone from the opposite gender. There was a tendency for Black Americans and Asian Americans to be the least popular choices.

Interviews with Third and Fifth Graders

1. When students were asked why some children wouldn't play with other children, there was a wide range of responses. The only responses that were mentioned by at least 10% of the students were: the other kids are not friendly, they are different mentally or physically, they like different activities, and they are of a different race or religion.

2. When asked directly if children are ever teased about the color of their skin, 76% said yes. Comments included:

"They think something is wrong with them if their skin is red or black."

"Called dumbbells because of their skin color."

"One of my friends called this kid a nigger."

3. When asked if children are teased about their families, 45% said yes. Comments included:

"Kids get teased because their parents are divorced and maybe their mother has to work."

"Sometimes families don't have enough money. They say, 'who'd want to play with someone who doesn't have a good doll'."

4. When asked if children are teased about their religion, 37% said yes. Comments included:

"You're stupid; you're Mormon."

"They say if you're not my religion, I don't like you."

"It depends on where you are. If people were mostly Baptist then they would tease the Mormons." (This child just moved to Utah three months before the interview.)

5. The most frequently named sources (mentioned by approximately 32% of the children) from which students reported learning their views about Black Americans, Asian Americans, and Mexican Americans were the media (e.g., television, movies, and books). In the case of American Indians, children more frequently mentioned learning about them from school (54%). For the other racial and ethnic groups "school" was only mentioned by approximately 16% of the children. Only about 15% of the children reported having learned about each of the various groups from personal experiences with a member of that group.

6. When children were asked if they knew what the word "prejudice" meant, only one child could give a fairly accurate definition. Twelve children had heard of it and seemed to have partial knowledge of what it meant (e.g., When someone doesn't like you).

7. When asked what it meant to be an American, the children's comments were surprisingly shallow. Twelve percent of the children could not think of an answer. "Being free" was the most common response (57%). There were no other responses that were given by over 10% of the students.

Interviews with the Teachers

1. Teachers were usually aware that some children in their classes do end up being excluded or teased. These children were of a minority racial, ethnic, or religious group; overweight; poor; disabled; learning disabled; or were unattractive.

2. Teachers related making concerted efforts to terminate such behavior.

3. Only two teachers reported directly addressing the topics of prejudice or discrimination. Many of the teachers did not know how to approach such a discussion.

4. All of the teachers were interested in activities that would help children to understand differences and show more tolerance for others.

5. The vast majority of the teachers also agreed they would like to spend more time on such citizenship issues.

Chapter 2

LEARNING ABOUT PREJUDICE

A large body of research indicates that children are not immune to forming prejudicial stereotypes or discriminating against others on the basis of such differences as race, ethnicity, religion, appearance, or economic status (Brown, 1972; Milner, 1975; Williams & Moreland, 1976).

Children learn prejudice from the total environment in which they live. Unless the larger society addresses prejudice, children will continue to develop prejudicial thoughts. These thoughts will likely lead to acts of discrimination. To combat prejudice, educators must consciously seek to instill in children a basic understanding of human rights such as justice, equality, and respect for group differences and individual integrity. However, these basic principles of democracy, sincerely spoken of within the classroom setting, cannot blind children to the realities of injustice and intolerance they observe around them. Conflicts that children observe in society, as well as those they are exposed to within their own social worlds, must be addressed. Children must understand the concepts of prejudice and discrimination in order to identify and guard against them.

To assist the classroom teacher, this chapter includes a number of activities that address the general meaning and definitions of such concepts as prejudice, discrimination, generalizing, stereotyping, and individual frame of reference.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: "Detecting Prejudice"

People will often make a value judgment regarding something about which they know little or have not experienced. The following activity will assist children in recognizing this tendency to form opinions before all the facts are known. [Adapted from: Populot Education Resources. (1979). *Detecting prejudice*, Toronto, Canada: Williams-Wallace Productions.]

Copy the following questions on to one sheet of paper. Put a dotted line down the middle. Have children fold the paper along the line before completing the questions on Part A. After completing Part A, have them complete Part B.

PART A

1. Do you like parakeets?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
2. Do you like anchovies?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
3. Do you like Renaissance music?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
4. Would you like to live in Australia?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
5. Do you like to waltz?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
6. Imagine a beautifully wrapped gift in a store window. Would you like to know what is in it?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____

PART B

1. Have you ever owned a parakeet for a month or more?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
2. Have you ever eaten anchovies?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
3. Have you ever attended a Renaissance concert or heard a recording of Renaissance music?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
4. Have you ever been to Australia?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
5. Do you know how to waltz?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____
6. Do you think that a beautifully wrapped gift would contain something of value?
   Yes____ No____ Uncertain____

Have students score each question one at a time according to the directions below. Write the score for each question on a sheet of paper and add up the scores.

SCORING CHART

If your answer in Part A was	*and* your answer in Part B was	You get this many points
(for Questions 1 to 5)		
NO	NO	0
YES	NO	1
UNCERTAIN	YES or NO	2
YES	YES	2
NO	YES	2
(for Question 6 only)		
YES	YES or NO	0
NO	YES or NO	0
UNCERTAIN	YES or NO	0
NO	UNCERTAIN	1
YES	UNCERTAIN	2
UNCERTAIN	UNCERTAIN	2

MY SCORE IS: #1____ #2____ #3____ #4____ #5____ #6____ =
(add total score here)____

RATING

11-12 . . . Open-minded and willing to study the facts

9-10 . . . . Average

6-8 . . . . . You are likely to make judgments without having adequate information. Be careful to take more time to consider why you have the opinion you do. You may be prone to prejudice.

0-5 . . . . . You need to be aware that you often make judgments without knowing much about the situation. This is a form of prejudice.

Activity 2: "What is Prejudice"

Adapted from: Cummings, M.A. (1974). *Individual differences: An experience in human relations for children.* Madison, Wisconsin: Madison Public Schools.

Put a treat in a box and wrap it crudely with newspaper and old string. Fill a matching box with dirt (so it will weigh about the same) and wrap it attractively.

Place the boxes on a table where students will notice them. It is likely they will inquire about them. If not, the teacher should initiate a discussion. Tell the children they may choose among the boxes which gift they would like for the class. The other one is to be kept by the teacher. If children vote on the pretty box, have them open it. The teacher should then open the other box. It is best that the teacher then puts away his or her box and does not share the treats. Put the box with the dirt in it on display with a sign that reads "prejudice."

Discussion:

1. Why did you choose that particular gift?
2. What did you think of your choice?
3. Did you think you could tell what was inside the box by what it looked like on the outside? What happened?

Tell the children their decision was based on a prejudice. Point to the sign you have made. If children are pleased with their choice, discuss what could have happened.

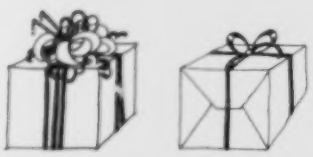
4. What do you think prejudice means? Solicit a definition from them. Lead into a discussion about prejudice against people.

Definition:

Prejudice is having an opinion or some ideas about someone without really knowing that person.

5. Do you sometimes have opinions or feelings about people because of what they look like, what they wear, or any other differences?
6. Discuss examples children provide.
7. What would it be like if someone judged you by the way you looked, what you wear, skin color, hair color, eyes.

(Another version of this activity is listed under Appearance. See Activity #41.)



Activity 3: "Understanding Prejudice"

Have the word "prejudice" become a theme for a week. You might want to have children use the word in the following ways.

1. Add it to your spelling list.
2. Have the class write an essay on it.
3. Children could design bulletin boards or posters around the concept (e.g., "Prejudice is being down on something you're not up on").
4. Have the class write short stories, poems, or skits exemplifying the unfairness of prejudice.
5. Discuss hypothetical questions such as:
   a. What if you were prejudiced against people with blond hair? How would you act toward them? What effect would your actions have on these people? What effect would it have on you?
   b. What if people were prejudiced against anyone who didn't have a white or blue car? (See how many of the students have blue or white cars.) Is it reasonable to judge someone by the color of their car? What about the color of their skin?

Activity 4: "Dislike versus Prejudice"

Sometimes children do not understand the difference between disliking someone and being prejudiced. Use the following stories to discuss the difference.

STORY 1

Tom: I don't like Ellen!

Jim: Why?

Tom: She gets angry and orders people around when we won't play a game the way she wants to. Yesterday, she called Jan a big fat pig because he wanted different rules.

Jim: Oh, she doesn't mean anything, she's just kidding around.

Tom: I don't care. I still don't want to play with her.

STORY 2

Karen: Carol, do you want to go play with Susan?

Carol: No, I don't like her.

Karen: Why not?

Carol: I just don't.

Karen: Come on, Carol, why don't you want to play with her?

Carol: Well, I heard she hangs around with those Bloom kids. You know what they are like.

Ask children which of these stories illustrates prejudice and which one illustrates a dislike.

Children should understand that it is natural to have preferences and dislikes. If you meet someone and he or she is mean to you, it is natural that you will not feel very good about playing with them again. However, if you said all boys or girls that look like this person or play with this person are also mean, you would be prejudging them.

Activity 5: "When is Prejudice Acceptable?"

In situations where a child's safety may be threatened, it is important that he or she not wait to find out what someone's intent is. Examples are: strangers who offer to give you a ride home, strangers who offer you presents (with or without a request for a favor), strangers who come to your home when your parents are not around, people who call for you to come to them from behind bushes or buildings, and unfamiliar dogs.

Help children to discuss acceptable prejudices by involving them in stories such as the one below.

> Sue and John stopped by the candy store on their way home from school. They didn't have any money but they always liked to look at all the different kinds of sweets. The owner, Mr. Jones, was a friend of their parents and sometimes he would give them a free sample. Mr. Jones wasn't in, so after looking at all the brightly colored candies for a few minutes, they started out the door. Just as they walked out the door a man approached them and told them they could have some of his candy. He said he had bought more than he needed and he would share it with them. He said, "My name is Mr. Collins. Come with me to my car and I will get you some candy."

What should Sue and John do?
Is it prejudice to think that Mr. Collins might harm them?
In what situations would it be all right to take candy from Mr. Collins?
Is it all right for them to take candy from Mr. Jones?
In what other situations is it acceptable to be prejudiced?

Activity 6: "Discrimination"

Explain to your students that prejudice is generally a way that we think about people. It may be defined as an opinion or attitude for or against something or someone without adequate basis.

Discrimination is when we act on those negative opinions or attitudes. It is when we deny individuals or groups of people fair and equal treatment. Most acts of discrimination fall within one of these four categories: verbal hostility, avoidance, individual acts of unfairness, and physical attack (Pettigrew, Fredrickson, Knobel, Glazer, & Veda, 1980).

Ask children to identify examples of behavior under each of these categories.

Verbal hostility: name calling, verbal harassment, jokes, teasing.

Avoidance: ignoring someone, avoiding contact, going somewhere else to play.

Individual acts of unfairness: excluding someone, not helping someone, different rules for different people, physical barriers (e.g., preventing disabled individuals access).

Physical attack: fighting, assaulting, kicking, tripping.

After discussing forms of discrimination, have the students list people who might be discriminated against.

People from different racial or ethnic groups
People from certain religious groups
People who are disabled
People who look different
People who are smart, people who are not

People who are old, people who are young

People who are poor, people who are rich

Ask each class member to write a personal account of discrimination that they may have seen or experienced. Discuss the stories they have written.

Activity 7: "A Different Frame of Reference"

Children need to learn that our likes and dislikes are influenced by where we live, our experiences, upbringing, values, and beliefs. This basic understanding will help them to be more tolerant of differences.

Ask students to respond to the following statements.

1. Utah is the best state to live in.
2. _____ is the best school.
3. The Dallas Cowboys are the best football team.
4. Math is an easy subject.
5. The best country to live in is the United States.

Ask children to share their responses. You might want to tally their responses on the board. Examine those questions about which children disagree. Help the class to realize that each child's responses were influenced by his or her individual frame of reference. Use examples such as the following:

Children living in Virginia would probably believe their state is the best state in which to live.

A child from another school would probably think his or her own school is the best.

A person living in Florida would likely think the Miami Dolphins are the best football team.

How hard you study on your math assignments and what kind of grades you receive would affect your attitude toward math.

A child living in Japan would probably think Japan is the best country in which to live.

Ask children to think of other examples that show how opinions are influenced by upbringing, experiences, beliefs, and values.

Activity 8: "Generalizing: All Third Graders Think Alike"

Tell students you are going on a make-believe trip to the store. You would like to buy a very special treat for each individual. However, it would take too long to buy different treats for everyone. You think it would be best to ask one student what they want and then you will buy that same treat for everyone. After all, aren't all third graders the same anyway? Ask one child what they would like.

Discussion:

Does anyone object to this method?

Why isn't it all right to get all of you the same treat?

Would it be all right if I said I would bring all the girls the same treat?

Emphasize that because someone belongs to a certain group, it does not mean he or she is just like the other people in the group.

Activity 9: "Genghis Khan"

Read the following story to students in your class.

"Genghis Khan"

One day when Tim was visiting a neighbor's house, their cat, Genghis Khan, hissed and clawed at him. He received a nasty scratch from the cat's claws. From then on Tim would not go inside this neighbor's house. If he saw a cat anywhere, he would avoid it. Pretty soon he would not go visit anyone's house if they had a cat. If a friend invited him over to play, he would always ask them if they had a cat. If they did, he would tell them he couldn't play.

Discussion:

How did his experience with Genghis affect his attitude toward all cats? What do you think of his solution?

Was it fair for Tim to judge all cats by his experience with Genghis?

Did Tim's feelings toward Genghis keep him from getting to know other gentle, friendly cats?

Explain to the class that Tim made an inappropriate generalization. (A cat hurt me. Therefore, all cats will hurt me.) It is true that some cats will claw you, but there are other cats that have very sweet dispositions.

Other examples you might give of overgeneralizing are:

I got sick after eating grapes one day.
Grapes make me sick.

Carrots taste awful.
Carrots are orange.
All orange food tastes awful.

Have children make up other overgeneralizations. Help them to understand that we need to understand how we think so we can guard against faulty reasoning.

Activity 10: "Generalizations that Hurt People"

Ask a child to share behaviors that they don't like (e.g., cheating, stealing, fighting). Using their suggestions make up stories that involve over-generalizing.

I saw Sue steal a toy.
Sue lives on Canyon Drive.
All people who live on Canyon Drive steal.

Jamie cheated on his test.
Jamie is in the fifth grade.
All fifth graders cheat.

Ask students to identify why these are nonsense. Continue this activity by making up generalizations about racial, ethnic, and religious groups.

Mr. Smith was drunk yesterday.
Mr. Smith is Irish.
All Irish people are drunkards.

Tom is very smart.
Tom is Jewish.
All Jewish people are smart.

Carolyn uses bad language.
Carolyn is Mexican American.
All Mexican Americans use bad language.

Sheila is a good dancer.
Sheila is black.
All Blacks are good dancers.

Help children to realize that these generalizations may influence the way we interact with people. Generalizations become stereotypes when we won't consider new information that is contrary to what we think we know.

For example: A group of children do not want to let Teresa Gomez into their club. Their parents have told them not to associate with children who use bad language. Even though they had never heard Teresa say anything bad, they have heard that Mexican Americans use bad language.

These children have prejudged Teresa. Even though they have never heard Teresa say anything bad, they are not willing to give up their idea that Mexican Americans use bad language. Their idea has become frozen; it has become a stereotype.

Activity 11: "Stereotyping"

Stereotypes can be defined as pictures in our heads. They are exaggerated pictures and can be either favorable or unfavorable. Have the children complete the following activity to introduce the concept of stereotyping.

Have children close their eyes and picture in their minds a Black American (American Indian, Asian American, Mexican American, retarded person, fat person, old person, Catholic, Mormon, or Jew). Have the students imagine how the person is dressed, who they are with, what they are doing, and where they are. Have them draw the images they saw on sheets of paper.

Ask children to share their drawings. Ask the students where they learned about Black Americans (or whatever group you have selected). Tell the children that the image that comes to mind might influence the way they act toward all people from this group.

Explain that sometimes the pictures in our heads keep us from wanting to know others. We call this stereotyping. We assume that *all* people from a certain group are the same. Ask the students if they can think of some examples of stereotypes. Does it matter if we stereotype? How are individuals who are stereotyped hurt by it?

Chapter 3

DISABILITIES

Children frequently develop negative beliefs, stereotypes, and prejudicial attitudes toward handicapped individuals. For example, here are some elementary students' comments about teasing at school.

"Well, no one wants to play with him because he's a mental."

"One time this boy on crutches fell down and everyone laughed. Then they all pretended like they were cripples."

"Sometimes kids call this girl a retard."

Other names used by children were, "spastic," "moron," "crazy," "weirdo," "gimpy," and "vegetable."

Why Might Children (or Adults) Discriminate Against the Disabled?

A greater understanding of why children might respond to the handicapped in such a manner will help us to deal more effectively with their attitudes and behavior. The following points will also assist the teacher in exploring his or her own attitudes and may be used for classroom discussion with older children (Grollman, 1977).

1. It is often difficult not to react negatively to people who are different from us because we do not understand them.

2. We might ignore or tease the mentally retarded because one of our greatest fears is that we will be found stupid and insignificant. "I'm so scared of failing it is difficult to have someone around me who does." Likewise, a child may feel the need to always be big and strong and may feel uncomfortable around individuals who are small and weak.

3. Physical beauty is important in our culture, so we feel uncomfortable around those whose appearance does not meet cultural ideals.

4. We often feel vulnerable around disabled persons because we too could become like them. Young children may even believe that disabilities are contagious.

5. Some individuals feel guilty about being able-bodied when they are around handicapped persons.

6. Many disabilities have been used as symbols for evil in the media (hunchbacks, hooked arms, pegs for legs, eye patches). Some may also see mental retardation as the result of something evil.

7. Children and adults feel unsure as to how to conduct themselves around disabled individuals.

8. Children pick up negative connotations of many disabilities from the adults around them.

What Can Teachers Do?

In order to counteract many of the feelings and insecurities children have around disabled individuals, they need to gain in their knowledge and understanding of disabilities. In addition, they need to have experiences with disabled individuals that reinforce more positive attitudes and behaviors.

Knowledge. Some of the most common derogatory names used by children are "retard," "mental," "dummy," and "stupid." Although they are used by children to describe many individuals who are not mentally retarded, their use fosters prejudice and discrimination toward those who are. Used in any manner, such terms imply that those individuals with lesser mental or physical capabilities are not desirable people.

Many children do not know or understand such words as mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, or paraplegia. Consequently, they are more likely to refer to such people using derogatory words they have heard, such as, spastic, mental, and weirdo. The amount of detail a teacher uses in providing knowledge about such disabilities would, of course, depend upon the age and maturity of the students. Community organizations and programs for disabled individuals can usually provide help and information for teachers. In addition, children often do not know what behavior is appropriate when interacting with a disabled individual. Teachers may help them to feel more comfortable around handicapped individuals through discussion and role playing.

Fiction, biographies and autobiographies are also excellent ways for children to gain knowledge about the lives of disabled individuals and their families. Try some of those listed in Chapter 9, either as individual assignments or as books to be read out loud to the class.

Understanding. It is difficult to understand those with handicaps if one has never experienced a disability. Simulation activities may assist children to develop empathy. It is important that simulations do not lead to excessive fear leaving children apprehensive about their futures. Simulation activities should be accompanied by other experiences which communicate the positive and fulfilling lives disabled individuals can live. For a more in depth guide to simulations involving disabilities, see Shaver & Curtis (1981).

Experiences. Having disabled individuals share information about their disabilities will certainly give children additional understanding and knowledge. However, children should also have opportunities for unstaged interactions with disabled persons. A handicapped individual need not be brought in just when a class is discussing disabilities. It is important that children interact with handicapped individuals while they are involved in normal activities so as not to make the disability the main focus of their attention.

Mainstreaming of disabled youngsters is an excellent way to break down prejudices. However, just having a disabled youngster in your classroom does not assure that students will change their attitudes and behavior. Unfortunately, students may tolerate or superficially accept the disabled child within

the classroom setting only because they know the classroom teacher would not accept anything less. In addition, be aware that students from other classes who have not been involved in classroom discussions regarding the disabled child may be more likely to display negative behaviors and attitudes toward a handicapped child.

Research indicates that barriers between disabled and non-disabled youngsters are most likely to break down when they work together toward cooperative goals. Make sure that children have the opportunities to work together on classroom projects and assignments.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 12: "Understanding Differences"

Assemble children for a discussion. Ask the following questions:
Have you ever heard the words "mental," "retard," or "stupid"?
What do these words mean to you?
What do these words really mean?
Mental: Having to do with the mind or brain
Retard: To delay
Stupid: Slow to understand
What are some things that have been hard for you to learn?
What if someone called you these names? How would you feel?
Why do people call each other such names?
Conclude with a discussion of how each person has different capabilities and limitations.

Activity 13: "Words Hurt"

Bulletin boards can be used to remind students that words do hurt. Have children create their own bulletin board ideas using headings such as: "Words that help," and "Words that hurt," "Friendly and unfriendly words," or "Purr words and snarl words."

Activity 14: "Emphasizing Strengths"

Children may be helped to understand that many handicapped persons have achieved greatness by exploring the lives of such individuals as those listed below.

CAUTION: Be careful in emphasizing the strengths of these individuals not to downplay the difficulties handicapped individuals encounter in overcoming the many physical and societal barriers.

Alexander the Great (epilepsy)
Ludwig van Beethoven (hearing impaired)
Sarah Bernhardt (amputated leg)
Elizabeth Barrett Browning (tuberculosis)
Winston Churchill (stuttering)
Thomas Edison (hearing impaired, learning disabled)
Francisco Goya (deaf)
Vincent van Gogh (emotionally disturbed)
George Frederick Handel (blind)
Helen Keller (blind, deaf)
John F. Kennedy (back injury)
Franklin Delano Roosevelt (poliomyelitis)
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (deformed, crippled)

Activity 15: "Learning about Disabilities"

Have older students select various disabilities and do oral or written reports on them. They may want to look at their topics in terms of incidence, cause, treatment, problems, and care. Interviews with disabled individuals would also be helpful.

Activity 16: "Blindness"

Listen to a television program or movie with the picture turned off or out of focus. Discuss the affect on understanding and learning.

Blindfold children and have them participate in everyday activities (eating, walking, using the restroom, or stairs).

Activity 17: "Deafness"

Have students place ear plugs or wads of cotton in their ears and participate in the daily school events.

Have students wear ear molds and hearing aids out in public. Have them report back on people's reactions.

Activity 18: "Speech"

Have students talk with something in their mouths such as dental cotton or a clean small rubber ball (make sure it is big enough they can't swallow it). Have older students make a phone call to a store. Ask them to discuss how it felt not to be able to communicate clearly.

Activity 19: "Motor Impairments"

Have students try to eat using a pair of pliers to hold their fork or have them write while holding a pencil in a pair of pliers.

Have students use crutches or a wheelchair one whole day at school. Have other students tie one arm behind their backs.

Have students put on mittens or heavy gloves and try to button a shirt or pick up coins.

Activity 20: "Mental Retardation"

Give students a difficult reading or math assignment that is vastly beyond their capabilities. Discuss their reactions. Discuss how many retarded individuals frequently face such frustrations.

Create a game or assignment where the students don't know the rules, or use foreign words when giving some of the key elements in an assignment.

Activity 21: "Do You Want Me to Help You?"

Have children discuss how they would respond to an individual in a wheelchair who is having a difficult time getting his or her coat off a coat rack. Encourage responses such as, "Do you want me to help you?" Stress that students should not just assume that an individual wants help.

Suppose a student (Kay) who is blind was going to be in this class. What would we need to do so she could work and play with us?

Suppose a student (Tom) who has a leg brace was going to be in this class. What could you do so he is included on the playground?

Activity 22: "Focusing on Similarities"

Design a unit of study that involves activities requiring adult supervision or assistance. Ask disabled individuals to assist children or bring in disabled speakers that are knowledgeable in an area you are studying. If you don't know anyone, call a local organization that provides support for disabled individuals.

Chapter 4

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Children develop racial and ethnic prejudices early in life. These attitudes are learned from messages about racial and ethnic groups to which children are exposed in their homes, schools, communities, and the media. In interviews with children as young as five and six years old, researchers have consistently noted the early formation of stereotypes and biases in children toward groups different from their own (Milner, 1975; Williams & Morland, 1976).

Despite such evidence, it is not unusual for teachers to feel their children are not prejudiced; after all, the children seem happy and integrated. (In areas where the population is virtually homogeneous, this attitude that children have no prejudices seems even more prevalent.) Unfortunately, teachers are often not aware of the social goings-on in their classrooms. This, coupled with a general inclination to see children as too "innocent" to be prejudiced, may prevent many teachers from addressing issues of prejudice and discrimination. It has also been observed that children realize early that their teachers will not stand for overt derogatory remarks or actions against ethnic or racial groups. Unfortunately, checking these displays of prejudice and discrimination is no guarantee that the underlying biases and misperceptions have been changed at all. Although the obvious signs of prejudice may not continue, without further discussion of the issues, the prejudice and discrimination simply go underground (e.g., they are expressed outside the classroom, at playgrounds, bus stops, and in the neighborhood).

Our country is made up of people who are like us and people who are different from us. Children need to learn to see these differences among people as positive qualities. They need to have respect and tolerance for individuals who are different from themselves. These are positive goals for our children that will prepare them to live in a nation which is multiracial and multicultural. However, this goal for mutual acceptance and tolerance cannot be built upon a base riddled with prejudice and discrimination. Children need to know about prejudice, they need to be able to recognize it in themselves and others, and they need to move away from prejudice and discrimination by learning to respect and accept others' cultures and values as well as their own.

No Child is Born Prejudiced. Why Might Children (or Adults) Develop Prejudices Against Racial and Ethnic Groups Different from Their Own?

1. Children learn about the prevailing social order early in life. They observe existent patterns in the culture and imitate them. Prejudice is rarely taught directly, it is more likely to be caught from a child's exposure to prejudicial adults or peers.

2. For most individuals there is a strong need for a sense of personal and group status. As one strives to see oneself in a positive or superior light, the disparaging of other individuals or groups may serve to enhance one's own sense of worth.

3. It is natural for young children to respond with fear to individuals who look different from that to which they are accustomed. Such fear, however, usually subsides quickly unless it is reinforced in some way. (e.g., The mother or father also responds with fear or anxiety in the presence of this individual or other members from his or her group.)

4. The media are often children's only exposure to some groups. Although changing, stereotyped portrayals of certain ethnic and racial groups abound in literature, television and film.

What Can Teachers Do?

We know that prejudices are not innate and that they result from the "informal and formal transmission of ideas in our cultural pattern" (Allport, 1983, p. 32). Efforts must be made within our schools to move our students away from prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory actions toward acceptance and tolerance of differences.

> **CAUTION:** Teachers cannot expect to raise the awareness level of their students if they do not seek to examine their own attitudes first. Very few of us will admit we are prejudiced against some racial or ethnic group, but in reality there is some prejudice in almost everyone. Teachers must ask themselves if there are groups of children or adults whom they prejudge and then make efforts to examine and change their own attitudes.

Reducing ethnic and racial prejudice means teachers must work to increase children's knowledge, increase understanding, and increase opportunities for experiences with racial and ethnic minorities.

Knowledge. Accurate information is an asset in the effort to improve human relations (Allport, 1958). Lessons in democracy, law, and science may be valuable in breaking down prejudice. Democracy means that all individuals, regardless of gender, race, religion, or nationality are guaranteed certain rights. Among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The constitution protects the rights of all citizens and in recent years laws have been passed that continue to strike out against cases of prejudice and discrimination. Science can also contribute to the fight against prejudice. Scientists have found nothing to support the contention that any race is inherently superior or inferior to another. Information from all areas of the curriculum, well beyond those mentioned above, may be utilized to combat prejudice.

There are excellent activities available in multicultural curriculum units

that will assist teachers in their efforts to reduce prejudice. Extensive efforts have been made in the field of "multicultural education" to share knowledge and increase understanding of the many cultural groups within our country. However, cultural awareness that is taught during "Black American Week," "Mexican American Week," or "Native American Week," leaves a lot to be desired. Often, in these cases, a large portion of the school year remains ethnocentric. In addition, some of the units that are available and are used in this intensive fashion promote stereotyped images of minority groups. For example, during Native American Week, children may be seen making teepees, Indian headbands, and coloring pictures of Indians dressed in animal skins. Educators must be aware that many teaching materials still display archaic racial and cultural attitudes that do little to break down misperceptions and stereotypes, and may in fact lead to their development.

Good fiction, biographies, and autobiographies are excellent resources for helping children to gain knowledge of different cultural and racial groups. There are also a number of *good* books that address prejudice and discrimination directly. See Chapter 9 for books to read aloud, or to use for individual or class assignments.

Understanding. It is difficult to understand prejudice and discrimination if one has never experienced it. This chapter includes two simulation activities that will help children to internalize these concepts. However, these activities should be used with caution. Some children may internalize the treatment to such a degree that it creates too much emotional stress. Be aware of how individual children are responding and be prepared to remind them as to why this activity is taking place. In some cases it may be necessary to stop the activity.

Experiences. Research indicates that barriers between racial and ethnic groups are most likely to break down when individuals from these groups work together toward common goals in equal status environments (Allport, 1958; Milner, 1975). Every effort should be made on the part of the teacher to increase children's interactions with people from various ethnic and racial groups. The type of activity where an individual from another culture comes to the classroom and shares slides, pictures, and objects that teach about his or her culture is informative but does not necessarily work against prejudice. For example, individuals may enjoy many aspects of Black American culture and yet still be prejudiced against Blacks. Likewise, children may learn the facts of Mexican American history without learning tolerance. Activities with individuals from different races and cultures which take place in natural situations (not those focusing on the study of minority groups) appear to be the most effective in changing attitudes (Allport, 1958).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 23: "Symbolic Colors"

Draw (or have children draw) five boys or girls, one on black paper, one on white paper, one on yellow paper, one on red paper, and one on brown paper. Display the figures and ask the students why we refer to people as white, red, brown, black or yellow. Hold up the five figures next to pictures of people from various racial groups and ask if anyone is really red, yellow, black or white.

What color skin do people really have? Tell students that these colors are symbols for the many different races of people that live in our country and in the world. Ask the students why they think people have different skin colors. (Follow this with the activity on skin color.) Display figures on a map of our country under a title such as, "We Are All Americans."

Activity 24: "Skin Color"

Students often have little sense of the physiological reasons for differences in hair, skin, and eye color. Try the following series of activities with your students. (Source: Cummings, M. [1974]. *Individual Differences: An Experience in Human Relations for Children*, Madison, Wisconsin: Madison Public Schools. Activities 24-27.)

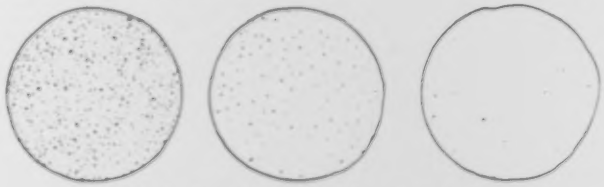
Draw a sun on the board. Ask children if they know what the sun has to do with skin color. Then proceed with the following explanation.

The sun gives off rays that are dangerous to the skin of all people. The skin has protection. This protection is called melanin. Melanin is a black pigment (pigment simply means coloring) that is very tiny, so tiny that it can only be seen through a microscope. When the rays from the sun shine on the skin, the melanin absorbs or soaks up the rays and prevents the skin from burning.

The skin is made up of three layers. The top layer looks like a piece of wax paper. (You can see through it in much the same way you can see through plastic or wax paper.) The middle layer, among other things, houses the melanin. The bottom layer has the nerves and other important body parts in it. Well, what does all of this have to do with skin color differences?

Let's take a look at some skin under a microscope and find out how the melanin causes the skin to come in different colors.

Teachers may wish to borrow or pretend to borrow pieces of skin from students. Ask to borrow a piece from a light skinned child, one darker, then one still darker. Pretend to place skin under a microscope while actually drawing circles on the board with dots in each.



All circles should be close in size.

Explain to children that you mixed up the skins and will have to now call them Skin #1, #2, #3. Ask them if they can tell who they belong to. Have them look at the three children from whom you borrowed the skins and emphasize that the dots represent the melanin and remind them that melanin is black.

They should discover that the more melanin a person has the darker the skin will be.

Discussion:

1. Does melanin have anything to do with the way a person acts?
2. Explain why melanin is in the skin.
3. Who determines how much melanin each of us is to have?
4. Does the amount of melanin a person has make him or her better or worse than anyone else?

Activity 25: "Sun Tanning (to follow skin color activity)"

The illustration from the above activity may be used as this lesson is a logical extension of it. Because the sun can be harmful, the skin has melanin in it. The skin usually has enough melanin to provide it with protection from day by day exposure, but is able to provide more when necessary. More melanin is necessary when it is hot and the person is exposed to the sun for long periods. This is called tanning. When a person stays out in the sun longer than the skin has protection, the skin actually receives a burn. Ask the children if any of them have ever received a tan or burn. (Note: If a child is dark naturally, he or she may use the term "darker" instead of "tanning," when referring to increased amounts of melanin.)

Activity 26: "Hair Color (to follow skin color activity)"

Explain that melanin is found in the hair as are other pigments such as the yellow-gold pigment (carotene). When there is a lot of melanin in the hair, the hair is dark. When there is little melanin, the hair is blonde. Red occurs when a person has little melanin and much yellow-gold pigment.

Children may wish to compare amounts of melanin found in children in the class. If children stand in front of the window, they can usually see the yellow-gold pigment in each other's hair.

Activity 27: "Eye Color (to follow skin color activity)"

The color of the eyes depends on the amount of melanin found in the color part. People with much melanin have dark eyes. Those with lesser amounts have light eyes. Blue-eyed persons have a small amount of melanin.

An exercise may be to instruct children to draw as many eye color differences as they can think of.

Activity 28: "Changing Colors"

Draw a large magnifying glass on a fairly heavy sheet of tagboard (the frame should be about 8 inches in diameter). Cut out the center of the magnifying glass and attach red, blue, green, or yellow cellophane to the frame.

Ask for two volunteers that are friends. Have one child describe how she feels about the other child. (Why is she a good friend?, What is she like?, and so forth.) Give this same child the magnifying glass and have her look at her friend again. Have the student describe how her friend has changed. (She should say that her friend has changed colors.) Ask the child if the new color has changed her feelings about her friend. Stress that the color of a person's skin, hair, eyes, or clothes should not influence how we feel about them. Ask the children how you really get to know whether you like someone or not.

Activity 29: "Friday Special"

Assist students in gaining greater knowledge of the meaning of justice by doing the following simulation. (Source: Seattle Public School District #1 [1979]. *Rainbow ABC's, Curriculum Supplement*. Seattle: Seattle Public Schools.)

Cut enough ballots for each student to have one. Make ⅓ grey, ⅓ green, and ⅓ orange.

Procedure:

On Monday, explain to the students that Friday afternoon will be theirs to plan. They may choose only two activities and all must participate in the choices. After discussion of possible choices, nominations will be called for and the decision will be made by voting on ballots. Mix the colors of ballots and hand out at random. When ballots are collected, sort out according to color. Count and tally only the grey ones. State that according to the laws in the early years of our country, only free White men could vote. Since the grey ballots represent this group, those are the only ones you are going to count. Do the students think this is just? Discuss, but leave the tally as is.

On Tuesday, explain that after many years of hard struggle culminating in the Civil War, free Black males won the right to vote. However, local poll taxes, "literacy" tests, and other discriminatory acts often prevented them from voting; therefore, you will count ½ of the green ballots. Is our system just or fair yet? Discuss and add the tally of ½ the green ballots.

On Wednesday, the orange ballots may be counted and added to the tally. Explain that in 1920, after many years of struggle, women won the right to vote. In 1924, Native Americans won the right to vote after finally being declared citizens of the USA.

On Thursday, the rest of the green ballots may be counted. Starting in the 1950's, there were some major changes in the voting laws making poll taxes and other discriminatory acts illegal. There were larger scale efforts to help register all eligible votes. Now all of the votes are in, and the students can learn what they voted to do.

Discuss the idea of justice as equal rights for all. Are we all equal? Some people are richer, stronger, or better looking, and so forth, but justice exists when we all have equal rights.

Activity 30: "What Equality Means"

Have students write a composition on, "WHAT EQUALITY MEANS TO ME," or the "THE MEANING OF FAIRNESS." Have students read their compositions or display them on bulletin boards.

Activity 31: "Famous People"

Have students select famous persons from various racial and ethnic groups and make reports on them. Emphasize that important contributions have been made by individuals representing all groups.

Activity 32: "Bulletin Boards"

Using pictures depicting different racial and ethnic groups in any bulletin board you plan, let children know that there are all kinds of people in the world.

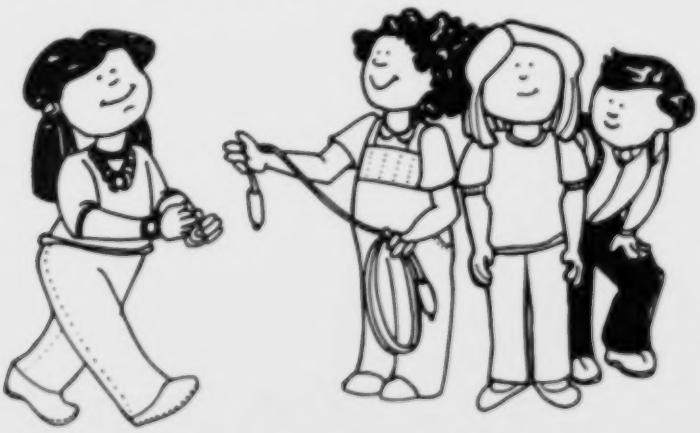
It is particularly important in homogeneous or biracial classrooms that children learn there are people who are different in appearance than those represented in their class and community.

Activity 33: "Many Different Kinds of People Live in America"

Have students make a large outline of the United States to put on the bulletin board. Students may draw or cut out pictures of children and adults from various ethnic and racial groups. Encourage the students to identify and stay away from stereotyped pictures (e.g., American Indian with teepee, bow and arrow, or Asian Americans dressed traditionally). Attach the pictures to the bulletin board randomly. Use this bulletin board to discuss that Americans come in all shapes, sizes, and color.

Activity 34: "Share a Smile"

Have students cut out pictures of smiling individuals from many different ethnic and racial groups. A bulletin board such as this encourages children to see the similarities among groups. (e.g., We all smile when we feel happy and smiles are an international sign of good will.)



Activity 35: "Discrimination Simulation #1"

Explain to your students that you are going to have an activity that will help them to understand what it feels like to be treated unfairly. Arrange the children's desks in your class by hair color, eye color, which side of the school they live on, or some other characteristic that will create two approximately equal sized homogeneous groups. If group membership is not easily identifiable, have students wear arm bands or paper collars of different colors. Tell the students they must abide by the following rules for the remainder of the day.

1. You may not speak with anyone from the other group.
2. You may not play with anyone from the other group.
3. You may not assist anyone from the other group.

Leave time at the end of the day to discuss how children felt when they were separated by their differences. How does it feel to have the way you look or where you live determine with whom you do and don't play and work?

Activity 36: "Discrimination Simulation #2"

A more intensive version of this simulation that received national attention is taken from William Peters' (1971) true story, "A Class Divided." It is the story of a classroom teacher, Jane Elliott, who taught in a rural Anglo community. Jane Elliott knew, after witnessing her students' reactions to Martin Luther King's death, that they had little sense of what prejudice and discrimination were about. She devised a simulation to help them understand what it felt like to experience discrimination.

Divide the students as discussed in the previous simulation into Group A and Group B. Tell your class that for one day Group A will get more privileges than Group B. Explain to them that on the following day it will be reversed. Give them rules such as the following:

1. Group A will always be the first excused for any activity.
2. Group B must sit at the back of the class.
3. Group A may use the drinking fountain anytime but group B must ask permission to use the fountain. They must use paper cups when they get drinks.
4. Group A may go for seconds in the lunch line but not group B.

Throughout the day treat students in Group A as though they are better students, workers, and friends. Make a particular effort to compliment and praise students from group A. (e.g., "You can tell John is in Group A, look at how neat his writing is.") Throughout the day avoid complimenting students in group B. Instead, point out occasions of rudeness or misbehavior as being characteristic of B's.

At the end of the day have students take off their arm bands or collars and remind them that tomorrow they will switch roles. The next morning reverse the rules; group B is now the privileged group. Be sure to leave time to discuss the activity at the end of the second day.

Discussion:

How did you feel when your rights were taken away from you and you were treated badly?

How did you feel when you had special privileges?

Why was what we did wrong?

What did you learn?

Should the way people look or where they live determine what kind of privileges they get and how we act towards them?

What do you know about prejudice and discrimination that you didn't know before?

How do people learn prejudice?

How do people act when they experience prejudice? (See if the children remember doing any of the following: Drawing closer together with their own group, always being on guard for possible snubs, working harder to be good, hiding their true feelings, acting as though it doesn't matter, discriminating against the other group in return – getting even, getting angry and lashing out, or acting like they say you are.)

Assure children that they are all equal and that whatever characteristic was used for dividing them makes no difference. Review the meaning of prejudice with the children.

Activity 37: "Racial and Ethnic Slurs"

Such words as "nigger," "spic," "chink," and "wop," are heard even among young children, and their use must be dealt with quickly and directly. When such name calling occurs, teachers should focus on the intent of the name calling rather than the word itself. Just as when someone is called "ugly" or "stupid," racial and ethnic slurs are an effort on the name caller's part to hurt, anger, or blame the victim. (Oftentimes children do not even know the meaning of the words they use; they know only that they are derogatory.) Name calling may also be a way for the individual to achieve personal status for him or herself (i.e., you are not as good as I am). Discussions along the following lines take the focus off the word and stress the intent.

1. Have the students discuss the event that provoked the name calling.
2. Ask the child why he called the other child a name.
3. Emphasize that name calling hurts people and perpetuates false ideas.
4. Ask the children to think of more constructive ways to express their feelings or desires.
5. Stress that name calling is not okay and is not allowed. If the child indicates that his or her parents do it, you might explain that while some people do it, at school and around you, it is not all right. Emphasize again that name calling hurts people and perpetuates false ideas. (Asking the child to choose between parent and teacher should not be demanded.)

Some children who are confronted about name calling feel it is not their fault if the person's feelings are hurt. "After all," they might respond, "it doesn't hurt my feelings." In such cases, encourage the child to understand that we are all different and we all respond differently to situations. If an individual's feelings are hurt by our words, his or her feelings must be respected.

Activity 38: "Planning Interactions"

Make an effort to invite individuals from minority groups into your classroom as speakers or as project assistants. (This is particularly important in schools with homogeneous populations.) Have the speaker's topic or project be unrelated to issues of culture or prejudice. For example, during "Dental Health Week," ask a dentist who is an Asian American to discuss the importance of dental care. When doing projects on constellations, have an astronomer who is Mexican American advise the students. (Do be careful not to reinforce career stereotypes in the interactions you plan.)

Chapter 5

APPEARANCE

"Fatso!" "Carrot top!" "Bean pole!" "Tinsel teeth!" "Four eyes!" "Freckle Face!" What adult does not remember these epithets of childhood?

Children as well as adults are aware of the importance of attractiveness in our culture. People, young and old, are judged by the way they look with attractive people being stereotyped more favorably – and considered to be more socially desirable – than unattractive individuals (Adams & Crossing, 1978). Cultural standards of attractiveness are learned early in life. For example, even 4-6 year olds indicate a bias against unattractive children. Children judged to be unattractive are less likely to be chosen as playmates and are characterized by other children as having more negative social behaviors than their attractive peers (Dion & Berscheid, 1974).

Duane Willard (1975) described the negative treatment of unattractive people as "Aesthetic Discrimination against Persons (ADAP)." He feels strongly that action must be taken to create greater awareness of this form of discrimination. Individuals of all ages need to be made aware that we often prejudge individuals by their physical appearance when in fact attractiveness has little to do with a person's potential. We need to move away from a tendency to develop expectations for individuals based on attractiveness.

How and Why Do Attractiveness Stereotypes Form?

1. Children observe that a great deal of time and money is spent on "making oneself attractive" in our culture. Certainly the importance of attractiveness would be a difficult message to ignore. (Note the proliferation of beauty contests for children and adolescents.)

2. Children learn evaluative biases concerning attractiveness from the adults in their world. Parents and teachers alike often have different expectations for attractive versus unattractive people. For example, research indicates that attractive children are perceived by teachers as being more likely to succeed academically and socially than unattractive children (Adams & Crossman, 1978, p. 6).

3. The media tend to reinforce attractiveness stereotypes by equating beauty with goodness and ugliness with evil. Take, for example, the fairy tales

"Cinderella," "Hansel and Gretel," and "Snow White." These childhood favorites, along with any number of television shows and movies, portray the hero or heroine as handsome or beautiful and the villain as ugly, sleazy or homely.

4. Since attractiveness is valued and associated with positive personal qualities in our culture, a child may seek out attractive friends to enhance his or her own self-esteem or status. Likewise, he or she may feel that associating with an unattractive child will affect his or her status unfavorably.

5. Any child observed to be different may be the object of teasing and ridicule. Such taunting, on the part of other children, may be serving to compensate for their own insecurities about adequacy, acceptability, or attractiveness. (e.g., Children with low self-concepts are more likely to be prejudiced.)

What Can Teachers Do?

Most importantly, a teacher must be aware of his or her own interactions with children. Be aware that we often, inadvertently, give subtle messages to our children about the value of physical beauty. Give some thought to the following questions:

1. Are you more likely to develop special relationships with the attractive children in your class? Do these children receive more smiles and other nonverbal reinforcers? Are they more likely to receive a handshake, pat on the back, or hug? Are they more likely to be called on?

2. Do you compliment children on their appearance in ways that may encourage comparisons among children? "Look how pretty Suzy looks today!" "John, you always look so sharp!"

3. Do your bulletin boards portray only stereotyped images of cute children and attractive adults?

Teachers are in an excellent position to encourage children to accept others regardless of outside appearance. The following activities plus numerous books listed in Chapter 9 will be useful in helping children to learn the importance of accepting others for who they are, not for what they look like.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 39: "Jason's Wish"

(Source: Seattle Public School District #1. [1979]. *Rainbow ABC's, Curriculum Supplement*, Seattle, Washington: Seattle Public School District No. 1.)

Read the following poem to your students. Discuss what the world would be like if all people were alike, what things they might like and what things they might not like. What is meant by "differences in beauty" and "beauty of differences"?

JASON'S WISH

Jason was angry as he took out his bike.
"Why is everyone different? Why can't we all be alike?"
He sat by the river, and he tossed in his line.
"If people were like me, it would be mighty fine."

All of a sudden he caught a strange fish.
It said, "Let me go, and I'll give you your wish."
Jason headed for home, and he said, "Outta' sight!
If everyone's like me, it'll be all right!"

He saw his mom; she looked just like him.
And so did his dad and his sister, Kim.
At first he thought, "This is really neat!
With a team full of me's we can't ever be beat."

He headed for school at a full speed run.
"Boy, what a day. Will this ever be fun!"
He called to a classmate, "Say, what's up today?"
But since all thought alike, there was nothing to say.

He left for a movie with plenty of time,
But everyone went, so there was quite a line.
He looked for his friends whom he wanted to see,
But all looked alike, so which could they be?

Well, after awhile, he shouted, "No more!
One of me is fine, but a hundred's a bore!
There are differences in beauty. I now understand.
And the beauty of differences makes this a wonderful land."

Activity 40: "Our Human Rights"

(Source: Cummings, M. [1974]. *Individual Differences, An Experience in Human Relations for Children*. Madison, Wisconsin: Madison Public Schools.)

OUR HUMAN RIGHTS

I have a right to be happy and to be
treated with compassion in this room:
This means that no one
will laugh at me or
hurt my feelings.

I have a right to be myself in this room:
This means that no one will
treat me unfairly because
of my skin color,
fat or thin,
tall or short,
boy or girl,
or by the way I look.

I have a right to be safe in this room:
This means that no one will
hit me,
kick me,
push me,
pinch me,
or hurt me.

I have a right to hear and be heard in this room:
This means that no one will
yell,
scream,
shout
or make loud noises.

I have a right to learn about myself in this room:
This means that I will be
free to express my feelings
and opinions without being
interrupted or punished.

I have a right to learn according to my own ability:
This means no one will call
me names because of the way I learn.

Discussion:

What does the word compassion mean?

Why is it important not to laugh at others or hurt their feelings?

Have you ever had your feelings hurt at school?

Have you heard of anyone else being treated unfairly?

How can this poster help us to respect each other's feelings? (It can help us to remember that everyone has the right to be happy and treated compassionately.)

Activity 41: "People as Presents"

Find two boxes of almost identical size and put a treat in one and gravel or dirt in the other. Make them approximately the same weight. Wrap the two boxes in very different ways. Put the gravel or dirt in the first box and wrap it as attractively as you can. Put the treat in the second box and wrap it in newspaper or old paper with string for ribbon. Display the two boxes and tell the children they may choose which gift they would like for the class. Usually they will choose the pretty one. Have them open the beautiful gift and then the unattractive one.

Discussion:

How did you feel about your choice?

Why did you choose the one you did?

Can you judge a present by what it looks like on the outside?

Do we judge people this way sometimes, too?

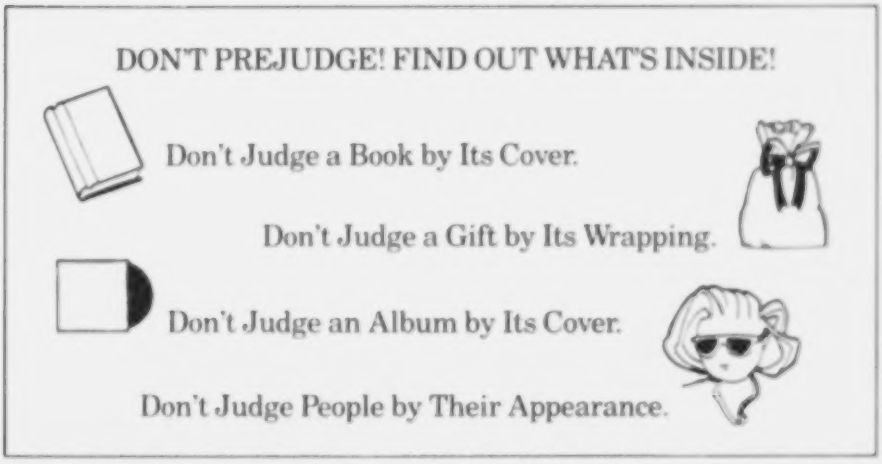
What do we need to remember so we don't do this?

Is the way people look on the outside kind of like the wrapping paper?

What does the word prejudice mean?

If we judge people by how they look on the outside instead of getting to know them first, is that prejudice?

Activity 42: "Bulletin Board: DON'T PREJUDGE – FIND OUT WHAT'S INSIDE"


DON'T PREJUDGE! FIND OUT WHAT'S INSIDE!
Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover.
Don't Judge a Gift by Its Wrapping.
Don't Judge an Album by Its Cover.
Don't Judge People by Their Appearance.

"Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover," "Don't Judge a Gift by Its Wrapping," "Don't Judge an Album by Its Cover," "Don't Judge People by Their Appearance." Display album covers, book jackets, empty boxes that have been wrapped differently and pictures of people on the board.

Discussion:

Focus on children's own experiences with books, albums, and presents. Discuss how we sometimes forget and judge people by their packaging.

Activity 43: "Name Calling"

Use hand puppets to dramatize a story such as the following.

Puppet #1 (Speaking to puppet #3) Oh good, time for recess, let's play tag.
Pupper #2 Can I play?
Puppet #3 Go away ugly (or fatso, shorty, weirdo, carrot head), we don't want you to play!
Puppet #2 (Moves away with head down.)

Discussion:

How would you feel if you were Puppet #2?
Why do you think Puppet #3 treated Puppet #2 that way?
What would you do if you were Puppet #2?
What could Puppet #1 do to make Puppet #2 feel better? (Have students act out a positive ending.)
What could Puppet #3 do to make Puppet #2 feel better? (Have students act out #3 Puppet apologizing.)
Draw attention to the following points:
This kind of behavior hurts.
People come in all different sizes and shapes.
It is prejudice not to play with someone because of the way they look.

Activity 44: "Election Time"

Cut out and mount on tagboard, pictures of boys and girls with varied appearances (include pictures of boys and girls of different races, body builds, weight, clothing and degrees of attractiveness). Create a ballot and have the children vote for which candidate they think would make the best school president, secretary, treasurer, and so forth. Tally the votes.

Discussion:

Let's talk about these candidates. Who do you think is the smartest?

Who would make the best president, secretary, and so forth?

How did you decide for whom to vote?

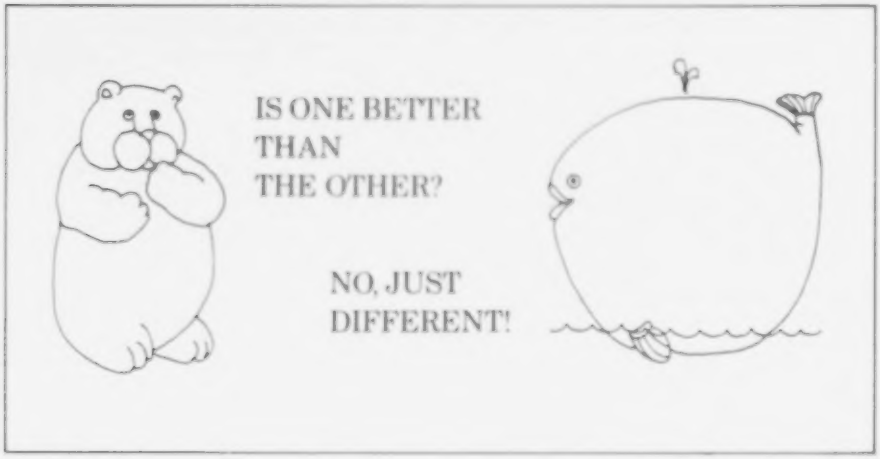
Was this a fair way to run an election?

What kinds of things should you know about a person before you vote for them?

What is it called when you think you know something about a person just by the way they look?

Activity 45: "Bulletin Board: IS ONE BETTER THAN THE OTHER? NO, JUST DIFFERENT!"

Put up a pair (or pairs) of pictures showing two very different kinds of animals.



Discussion:

How are the bear and the whale different?

Do you think it is obvious to them that they are different?

Do you think they would call each other names because they are different?

Do you think they respect each other's differences?

What does the word respect mean? (Being considerate and thoughtful of someone else's rights, feelings, and beliefs, even if they are different from your own.)

Do you think the bear and the whale like each other? (Not necessarily, respecting someone's rights and feelings does not mean you have to like them.)

What does it mean to be disrespectful? (Being inconsiderate, making fun of someone's differences, the opposite of respect.)

Activity 46: "Bulletin Board: I'M O.K., YOU'RE O.K."

Draw or cut out pictures of children who are fat, thin, tall, short, wear glasses, wear braces, have freckles, and have different skin and hair colors. Mount these on the board.

Discussion:

How is each one of these people different?

In what ways are these people all alike? (For example, they have basic human needs and feelings.)

What does "I'm OK, You're OK" mean? (I respect myself and you.)

Sometimes people are disrespectful. Sometimes they call people names and tease them. What do you think she (point to one of the pictures) gets teased about?

How do you think she feels when she is teased?

What could you say about the people who tease someone like this? (They are being disrespectful.)

How do you feel when someone makes fun of you?

Why do you think people would call someone a name? (They judge people who are not just like them. They use themselves as an example of the way other people should be.)

Is everyone different?

Is it OK to be different? We are all UNIQUE.

Activity 47: "Why We All Look Different"

Children oftentimes do not understand why people have different color skin, hair and eyes. Use Activities 24-27 for assistance in explaining these differences. Other questions about skin and hair that often come up are addressed below.

Freckles: Some people have much melanin concentrated in very small places. These places look darker and are called freckles.

Light palms and soles of feet: The skin is much thicker in these places so the melanin does not show through as well.

Albinos: Some people are born without any melanin at all. People who have no melanin have white-pink skin, white hair, and red eyes.

Types of hair: The shape of the sheath of the hair as it is forming determines whether hair will be straight, curly, or kinky. If the sheath is round, the hair will grow straight and round. If the sheath is oblong, the hair will come out wavy. If the sheath is more extremely oblong, the hair will be kinky.

Chapter 6

RELIGION

Children's social worlds reflect many of the prejudices of the adult community. Therefore, it should not be surprising that many of our students have developed negative attitudes, stereotypes, and beliefs about religious groups other than their own. Such statements as the following were shared by children ages six to eleven.

"They said I would go to the devil because I didn't go to their church." (age 9)

"They chased me home yelling that the Jews killed Jesus." (age 11)

"You can tell if someone goes to a different church because they're bad people." (age 6)

"Sometimes I think the kids won't play with me because I don't go to their church." (age 9)

Prejudice and discrimination against religious groups different from one's own must be dealt with in the same manner as any other type of prejudice or discrimination. Children must learn that:

1. It is wrong to prejudge people. To judge someone you do not know by their religious affiliation is the same as judging someone you do not know by their skin color or where they live.

2. Our country grants people the freedom to practice the religion of their choice. No person should be discriminated against. It is important for children to know that one of the reasons early settlers came to this continent was to gain freedom to worship as they pleased.

3. Religion is an important part of human culture. Just as with other aspects of culture, there is a need for mutual understanding and respect. Living richly and peaceably with religious differences must be a goal of our classrooms.

Talking About Religions in Public Schools

It is unconstitutional to teach religion in the public schools, but it is not unconstitutional to teach *about* religions in the public schools. Supreme Court rulings have made it clear that it is legal to study about religions as long as no preferential or derogatory treatment is given to any single religion.

Religious differences are the basis for conflict in many societies, including

the United States. This is true today as it has been throughout history. Prejudice and discrimination against various religious groups continue to have negative and pervasive influence on relationships among human communities. Emphasizing our right to freedom of religion and dispelling religious stereotypes that lead to prejudice and discrimination are important goals for the classroom teacher.

Here are some important points to keep in mind when directing discussions or activities involving religions (State of Minnesota, 1976):

1. The school's approach to religions is academic, not devotional.
2. The task is to learn about religions and not to teach religion. Understanding and acceptance of religious diversity is the key element.
3. All discussions must be free of advocacy for any particular religious or antireligious point of view.

What Can Teachers Do?

Discussions involving religions must be handled sensitively and cautiously. The goal of increasing our students' knowledge and respect for other people must always be kept foremost in our minds. At the elementary school level, learning about religious diversity should be dealt with whenever it naturally arises. Organized activities as well as books listed in Chapter 9 may also be integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as citizenship, social studies, and the arts.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 48: "My Rights"

Have students work individually or in groups to make lists of what rights they think all people should be entitled to.

Have the students read their lists and compare them to the Bill of Rights. Ask how many students included freedom of religion.

Discussion:

Why do you think freedom of religion is important?

What might happen if we didn't have the First Amendment?

How would you feel if you were not allowed to practice your religion?

Would it be fair to put other people down if they did not practice the same religion as you?

How would you feel if someone told you what religion you had to be?

Emphasize that our country was founded by people who came here to worship as they pleased. Diversity of religious thought and practice is a strength of our country.

Activity 49: "Dear Helpful Hannah (or Hal)"

Help students to study their emotions and feelings by answering letters to "Helpful Hannah (or Hal)." Students may also be split into groups with some writing the letters and others answering them.

Dear Helpful Hal,

A new family just moved to our neighborhood. One of the kids is just my age, he seems real nice. My other friend said I shouldn't play with him cause he goes to the _____ church. He said he won't play with me anymore if I don't get rid of my new friend. What should I do?

Sincerely,

Torn Between Friends

Dear Helpful Hannah,

Yesterday I was playing with my friends and they asked me what church I go to. I told them I was _____, and they laughed. They said I went to a bad (silly, funny) church and that their church was better. Now whenever I want to play with them they tease me and call me names. What should I do?

Sincerely,

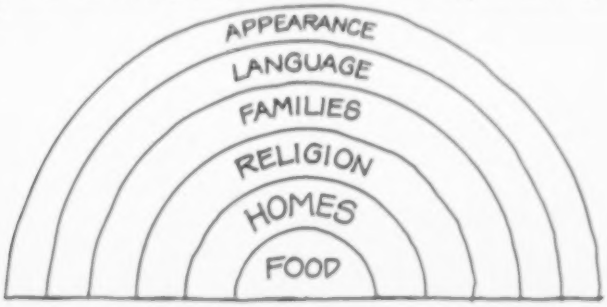
Rejected

Activity 50: "Current Events"

When studying current events, have students keep track of how many articles in the newspaper involve conflict over religious beliefs. Discuss the articles and emphasize that it is important that we find ways to live and work in a diverse world.

Activity 51: "Bulletin Board: AMERICAN RAINBOW"

Make a huge rainbow using six different colors of paper, or have children color one in on a large piece of white butcher paper. On each color have children collect or draw pictures or sayings that illustrate diversity in each area of the rainbow. (Homes, families, religion [pictures of different places of worship, ceremonies, and so forth] language, food, and appearance [clothes, race, ethnicity].)



Activity 52: "Religion Word Search"

Help children become familiar with the many kinds of religion that individuals practice by having them complete this word search. Words are written sideways, up and down, and backwards. One word is written diagonally.*

C A F P R E S B Y T E R I A N
E D Y D O S A D M E L S O M F
I N U O Y C O L Q O L Y O E S
M R L N N S B U D D H I S T L
V E A E C C A T H O L I C H A
E I P N A K P H M M O R M O N
T R O E E Y T E B A H A I D H
E R C R N A I R A T I N U I S
E N S A D P S A U G N U M S I
D L I Z H H T N S I D E Q T W
G O P A P D E L K G U B A D E
S S E N T I W S H A V O H E J
C H U R C H O F C H R I S T D

HIDDEN WORDS:

Baptist	Baha'i	Catholic	Jewish
Buddhist	Unitarian	Presbyterian	Church of Christ
Mormon	Quaker	Moslem	Episcopal
Methodist	Hindu	Jehovah's Witness	Nazarene
Lutheran			

*Have children create their own hidden word puzzle by having them look in the yellow pages under churches. Use the names of the churches listed to make a word game.

Activity 53: "Building a Culture"

(Adapted from: Seattle Public School District #1. [1979]. *Rainbow ABC's Curriculum Supplement.* Seattle, Washington: Seattle Public Schools.)

Discuss the word "culture." What does it mean? What are the elements of culture (religion, food, dress, language, music, art customs, and so forth)? Tell students they will each have the opportunity to participate in building a culture.

Divide the class into five groups. Inform them that it is the year 2050 and the world has become very crowded. Each group will be sent to a satellite colony to live. Each group may set up the culture of their choice. Time spent doing this may be minimal (20 minutes) or the activity may be ongoing for several days. Have students answer questions such as the following:

What will you call your satellite?

What language(s) will the people speak?

How will people dress? Will males and females dress alike or differently? (Draw pictures.)

What kind of religion will your culture have? What will it be called? What days will be special? Where will people worship? What kind of symbol will depict your religion?

What kind of music will your culture like? Name some musical instruments (or make some up) that you will take along.

What will be the ten most common foods?

List two games that will be the favorite sports of your culture. Make some up if you would like.

What other things will your culture do for entertainment?

List five customs that will be important in your culture (e.g., shaking hands, bowing, wearing hats).

List three special holidays you will have in your culture. How will they be celebrated?

What will people do for work? What industries might exist?

Add any other information that will help others to understand your culture.

After students have finished designing, sharing, and comparing their cultures, give them the following information.

Many years have passed. Each satellite has been developing for over a hundred years. Due to a plague which has swept the Earth, there is hardly anyone left on the planet. All the colonists have been called back to Earth to form a new society. Would you want to give up your culture? Does anyone want to lose their culture? What would happen if the people from the colony that had grown to be the largest thought everyone should believe the way they do? What could be done so that all could live peaceably together? Would there be some aspects of the other cultures in which you would like to share? Discuss the variety of choices that would now be available to everyone. Draw parallels between their feelings and those of the people in the many cultures that make up the United States. Is any one group right?

Chapter 7

FAMILY AND LIFE-STYLE

Children will often tease or exclude children who do not behave, dress, or live in line with the expected community norms. For example, children who are much poorer than the majority of their classmates, bring unusual or different lunch foods, or come from atypical families are likely candidates for school yard teasing and rejection. Almost any difference (such as a sandwich made out of homemade bread instead of store bought bread) may bring unwanted negative attention to a child.

Such reactions to differences may be largely the result of children's rigid conformity to peer norms. However, children's attitudes are also learned from the overt and covert messages children receive from adults, and the media. For example, on television the good life is often portrayed as the rich life. Commercials encourage children to impress their friends by being the first ones on their blocks to have the newest computer game. Their parents often succumb to these same suggestions which frequently equate happiness and worth with buying power. In addition to learning that the rich life is best, children often learn to associate being poor with ignorance, failure, laziness, and suspect moral character.

Accepting Differences in Life Style

The tendency of children to look at many differences as negative cannot be ignored by schools. Efforts must be made to assist children to understand that all individuals are different and that each individual deserves respect. It is unfortunate that many children (and adults) feel pressured to conform to what is considered acceptable to the majority group in which they find themselves. (Consider the third grader who would prefer to go hungry at lunch than be teased about the highly seasoned ethnic food her mother prepares for her.) Conformity to the group brings attention, recognition, approval and status to those who manage it. However, it also results in loss of self-esteem and personal identity.

What Can Teachers Do?

This chapter presents only a sample of the many activities that may be used by teachers to move children away from measuring people's worth by how well

they conform to a popular image. There are several excellent books available that specifically focus on self-esteem activities in the classroom. (e.g., *100 ways to Improve Self-Concept in the Classroom* by J. Canfield & H. C. Wells, and *Teaching Children to Love Themselves* by M. Knight, T. Graham, R. Juliano, S. Miksza, & P. Tonnies.)

ACTIVITIES

Activity 54: "Measuring Mary (or Mick)"

Tell the children the story about "Measuring Mary." Interest may be increased by taking a yardstick or ruler and taping a cutout of a girl's (or boy's) head on it.

"Measuring Mary"

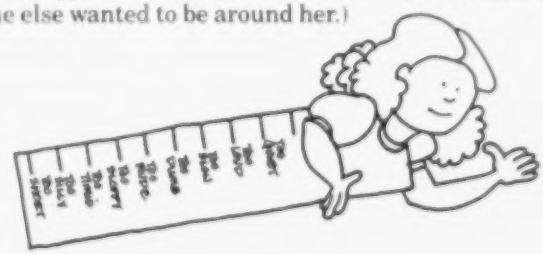
Mary was smart, cute, and athletic. She lived in a beautiful house with her parents and two brothers. Mary was very proud of herself: she knew she was a good person. More and more Mary began to notice that other people were not like her. Some of the people she knew were not very attractive, they did not dress as nicely as she did. Some of them didn't do so well in school; she thought they must not work as hard as she did. Mary thought it was a shame that these people were not like her. They must not be very good people. Pretty soon Mary would only play with those people who were a lot like her. If someone that was different wanted to play, she would tell them to go away because they were too dumb, too poor, too short or too ugly.

Discussion:

Why do you think Mary was called "Measuring Mary"? (Because she used herself to measure other children. She felt that everyone else should be just like she was.)

How do you think the children who were called names felt?

What do you think happened to Mary? (She was finally left alone to play by herself because no one else wanted to be around her.)



Activity 55: "A Bulletin Board: WHAT DO AMERICANS EAT?"

Have children bring in the names of favorite foods eaten in their families. Encourage children to list foods that other children may not have heard of or tried before. The next day have them share the foods they came up with. Create a bulletin board by putting each food mentioned on a strip of paper (children may want to illustrate these). Use the title "What do Americans eat?"

Discussion:

Are you surprised at how many different kinds of foods we came up with?

Are there foods you have never tried that are on the board?

How would you feel about trying them?

Have there been foods you thought looked or sounded awful but actually tasted pretty good? What are some examples (peanut butter and dill pickle sandwich)? Is it fair to judge food by the way it looks or sounds?

Why is it that you like the kinds of foods you do? Help children to realize that we like the foods our families like because we are used to them.

If you had grown up in a different family, do you think you would like different foods?

Why do people sometimes make fun of people who eat different foods than they do? (They often judge the food by how it looks. They forget that all people are unique, and that everyone's food preferences should be respected.)

**As an extension of this activity, have children explore grocery stores with their parents for other foods that Americans eat but may be strange to them.

Activity 56: "The New Girl"

Read the following story to the class and have them discuss it. Emphasize that clothes can be very attractive, but we need to get past surface apperance and really look at the person inside.

"The New Girl"

Georgia was depressed. There was a new girl in class and she had just been asked by her teacher to show the new girl around for a couple of days and introduce her to other kids. Usually she would think it was great to help the teacher and show someone around, but this kid was different. Paula, the new girl, was a creep. She had stringy hair and she wore awful clothes. Her pants were too short and it looked like she had on a boy's old shirt. If this wasn't enough, at lunch Paula asked about free lunches. Georgia was embarrassed to be seen with this girl. She didn't think this girl belonged at her school. She just didn't fit in.

After school she would have to talk to her parents about what to do. Maybe she could get out of helping Paula.

Discussion:

What do you think Georgia's parents should tell her?

Why did Georgia think Paula didn't fit in?

Why was Georgia ashamed to be with Paula?

What did Georgia judge Paula on?

Is it important to get to know people before you make judgments about them?

How do you think Paula would describe her first day at school?

What do you think Georgia could do to help Paula not feel left out?

Activity 57: "Clothing, Just One Piece of Information"

Bring in two sets of adult clothing. One set should be neat and fairly new and the other set should be old and ragged. Label them Set A and Set B. (Pictures will do if necessary.)

Discussion:

Tell me about these clothes, describe them to me.

Describe the kind of person who would wear these clothes.

How can you tell what kind of person would wear these?

Could the same person own both of these sets of clothes?

Sometimes do you think you can tell what kind of person someone is by their clothes?

What is the word for judging someone you don't know by the way they look? Have children discuss the meaning of the word prejudice (pre-judge).

How does it feel when someone judges you by your clothes instead of getting to know you?

How would someone else feel if they were judged by the kind of clothes they wear instead of other qualities?

Activity 58: "Rich Folk – Poor Folk"

Divide children into two groups of equal size (Group A and Group B). Tell the students that children in group A are rich and the children in group B are poor. Have them divide into groups and answer the following questions.

Have group A (the rich group) fill in the blanks of the following sentences. Put the words they choose under a heading on the chalkboard labeled, "Poor Folk."

1. Poor kids are _____.
2. Children who are poor are _____ in school.
3. Poor children act _____.
4. Poor children like to _____.
5. You can always tell a poor kid by _____.

Have group B (the poor group) fill in the blanks of the following sentences. Put the words they choose under a heading on the chalkboard labeled, "Rich Folk."

1. Rich kids are _____.
2. Children who are rich are _____ in school.
3. Rich children act _____.
4. Rich children like to _____.
5. You can always tell a rich kid by _____.

After both sets of words are on the board, have the children come together as one group. Tell them they are no longer in rich and poor groups. Have them discuss the following questions.

1. Are *all* rich/poor kids described by these words (point to the words on the board)?
2. Do labels keep us from getting to know people, because we already think we know all about them?
3. How would you really know if you did or didn't like someone?
4. Why is it a good idea not to label people?

(This activity could also be easily used to discuss city and country people.)

Activity 59: "Family Labels"

Have each child pick another member of their family and list how they are alike. You may want to give such examples as: same address, same phone number, same parents, same hair color, we both like dogs, we both like to swim. Now list ways you are different from this person. For example: I like science, he can swim better, I'm a better speller, he enjoys baseball, I have a hamster.

Discussion:

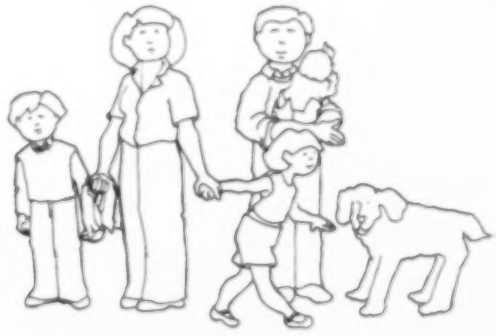
What would it be like if everyone thought you were just like your _____ (brother, father, sister, mother, or other family member), just because you are in the same family?

Would that be fair? What wouldn't they know about you?

Don't people like to be respected for what they really are, instead of what others *think* they are?

When we label people, we often overlook other qualities. For example, if someone calls Tom a "Texan," "Chink," "Jew," "Joe Smith's brother," or whatever, they are ignoring other qualities. A label often tells us only one thing about a person. Describing Tom as "Joe Smith's brother," overlooks that he is also a lawyer, he is very polite (unlike his brother), gives a lot of money to charities, and is a former swimming champion. Just because we belong to a group does not mean we are just like the other people that belong to it.

Labeling is particularly harmful when the label gives people a bad feeling about the person.



Activity 60: "Families, Families, Families"

Sometimes children feel that their family is the way all families should be and that different family structures are not quite right (small families, large families, single-parent, etc.). Use this activity to help children realize that there are many kinds of families and that every family must be respected.

Have each child draw and label a picture of his or her family. Use all the pictures to make a bulletin board on families. Encourage the children to identify the similarities and differences. Ask them what other kinds of families there are besides those identified on the board. If a certain possibility has not been mentioned, suggest it to the class (nuclear [parents and children], extended [includes other family members], single-parent, families without childen, no parent [child living with relative or guardian]).

Encourage children to see that all families are special and unique. No family is just like anyone else's.

Activity 61: "Definition of a Family"

(Adapted from R. A. Mortenson, [1980]. *The Prejudice Project*. New York: Anti-Defamation League.

Have children cut out a large number of pictures of people from magazines. Make sure all ages of people are represented. Display them on a table. Select at least two pictures from the table that could form a family (e.g., an elderly man and woman). Paste the pictures on a large paper circle. Ask the children if the pictures you selected make a family. Ask volunteers to come up and select pictures to make another type of family. Encourage the students to think of as many varieties of families as they can (e.g., extended family, single-parent family, foster parent family, and so forth). Attach all the circles together and hang them on a bulletin board or from the ceiling. Ask the children which one of the families is the best family. The answer, of course, is all of them. Each one is unique.

Encourage children to see that families may be defined as people who care about each other and live together in a home. Emphasize that each family is unique.

Chapter 8

GENDER

By Marilyn Burningham

The expectations made upon individuals that they should play certain prescribed roles because of their sex is known as sex role or gender role. These sex roles are learned and reinforced from the moment of birth. For example, usually the first question asked of new parents is, "Is it a boy or a girl?" From that point on, the child will be treated somewhat differently dependent on its gender.

Sex roles can be observed in (1) sex segregation at social gatherings; (2) different areas of concern by sex; (3) emphasis on different types of occupations; (4) different types of dress and grooming; and (5) different types of relationships and behaviors between and within the sexes.

In many cultures, desirable behaviors for boys include aggressiveness, suppression of emotion, well-developed reasoning ability, and sexual initiative. For girls, desirable behaviors include passivity, dependence, conformity, nurturance, and the inhibition of aggression. By the time children reach preschool, many are already exhibiting sex stereotyped play preferences and behavior patterns. The older children become, the more restrictive and stereotyped their behavior becomes.

Children's behaviors are influenced by a multitude of variables, such as parents, friends, and siblings, as well as books, newspapers, and television. From each of these sources children may form positive or negative prejudgments about members of the opposite sex, as well as about members of their own sex. For example, young boys may believe that they must be strong and that girls should be protected. Such stereotypes influence their own actions as well as possibly limiting the kinds of interactions they have with girls.

Increasing Awareness

It is extremely important that teachers and administrators examine four aspects of the learning environment in order to become more aware of ways traditional sex roles and stereotyped behaviors are transmitted.

1. Physical Environment. Do the pictures in the room and in the school exclude women or portray the sexes in stereotyped roles? Are girls shown in active play? Are boys shown in caring or contemplative roles? Does the school display athletic trophies of males and clothing displays of females? Are there

areas of the classroom that are boy areas such as the blocks and girl areas such as the housekeeping area?

2. School Curriculum. Many instructional materials used in the classroom indoctrinate children to prescribed behaviors. Females tend to be portrayed as passive and deriving status from their association with men. They are usually seen at home in nurturing roles, and when seen outside the home, they are shown in the traditional female roles of nurse, teacher, or secretary. Boys are often seen as competent, achieving, and career-oriented and are seldom seen expressing emotions. In examining materials, it would be well to ask the following questions:

Are boys allowed to show emotions?

Are boys and girls portrayed with a range of human responses?

Are there derogatory comments directed at girls?

Are mothers portrayed working outside the home? How wide is the range of occupations?

How are fathers portrayed?

Do boys and girls participate equally in activities?

Do children develop independently of each other?

3. School Organization. Counseling and guidance centers, career and vocational education centers, and school administration often transmit traditional sex role expectations to children in the school. The large percentage of female teachers in a school compared with the small percentage of females in administrative roles is an example of these expectations. For example: (a) attendance taken by sex; (b) classroom tasks assigned by sex; (c) differnt classroom activities for each sex; (d) different extracurricular activities; and (e) different expectations and treatment of behavior for each sex.

4. School Personnel. Attitudes of all those who work in the school should provide children with positive messages about their lives, now and in the future, and the multitude of roles that are open to them. Often teachers, principals, and counselors have different role expectations for girls and boys and may behave in ways that reinforce the traditional sex roles of the children.

What Can Teachers Do?

Becoming aware of how sex roles are portrayed and reinforced in the school is the first step to understanding how to alleviate stereotyping and discrimination by gender in the classroom. In addition, the following activities could be used to help children become more aware of tendencies to make judgments about individuals based on their gender.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 62: "In the News"

Read the newspaper for a week. Make a scrapbook of clippings about people that are working in nontraditional roles (e.g., men in nurturing roles). Discuss what limitations, if any, are placed on people working in the jobs discussed. Invite a speaker from "In the News" to visit the class and discuss their occupation.

Activity 63: "It's in the Line"

Brainstorm for all the different ways that the class can line up, divide into activity groups, get materials, and so forth. Try to use a different way each day. Examples:

All tie shoes line up first, velcro next, buckles or no fasteners last.

All those wearing a belt first, those not wearing a belt last.

Cereal eaters for breakfast first, anything else last.

If you gave someone a compliment today, line up here. If you didn't, think of one you could give and line up there.

Activity 64: "Check it Out"

Check a book out of the library or use a classroom text. Analyze the book using a survey sheet with the following questions:

Title of Book

Subject Area

Number of Pictures _____ Males _____
Females _____

Active Pictures: Males _____
Females _____

Passive Pictures: Males _____
Females _____

Vocations: (List for each gender)

Males	Females
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Activity 65: "Job Boxes"

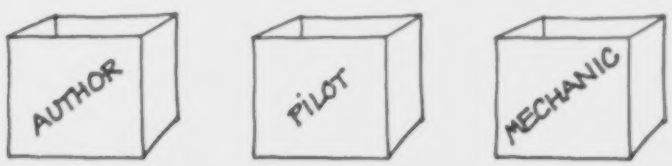
Label shoeboxes or other suitable boxes with names of occupations. Fill the boxes with materials children can try on that are associated with the different occupations. Examples:

Pilot: hat, flight schedule, wings, earphones

Doctor: smock, stethoscope, surgical mask, needles, syringe

Mechanic: work shirt, wrench, screwdriver, car parts

Allow children to play with the boxes and role play the occupations. Encourage children to role play nontraditional jobs for their gender by trying some yourself and reinforcing those who are adventuresome in their choices.



Activity 66: "Help Wanted"

Search the "help wanted" column of the newspaper. Classify the jobs listed by occupation. Tabulate which kinds of jobs are most requested. Gather data on the most requested occupations: Pay scale, experience necessary, education required. List areas of difficulty of each job for a male or for a female.

Activity 67: "Egg'ceptional Parents"

This activity encourages children to get in touch with their nurturing ability. Each child needs a soft boiled egg, a milk carton cradle, and a pink or blue ribbon. Each child will be given the responsibility of being a parent for the day of an "egg'ceptional baby." The children can draw for the sex of their "baby," but should be allowed to choose their own name. Children need to make their "baby" comfortable. They are given a bonnet for the baby. Discuss if children must wear certain clothing just because they are a girl or a boy. They may measure and weigh their eggs. The children must take the "baby" with them everywhere that they go during the day (older children could take the baby home and record information about their experience and feelings). After children have returned the "babies" to their nursery, discuss the feelings of the children when they had to give up their baby and their feelings of responsibility.

Activity 68: "Switching Gender Roles"

Have children read a story, newspaper article, or advertisement switching gender for every pronoun. Proper names should also be changed to represent the other gender. For example, each "he" would be read as "she," and if the name Susan were used, it could be switched to Sam. Have children discuss what seems so peculiar or even humorous now that the genders have been switched. Have the students discuss what this reveals about our society's gender-role assumptions.

Activity 69: "Can of Worms"

Purchase a large worm can or bucket from a sporting goods store. Have children write down situations, either real or simulated, relating to nontraditional sex roles, discrimination, exclusion, stereotyping, and so forth. All problems should be deposited in the worm can for future discussion. Children should be free to add problem situations to the can at any time. At a suitable time during the day, check the worm can to see if any of the worms are ready to crawl out. Read the problem and discuss it with the class as to how to solve the problem. Examples:

1. Joanie wants to play basketball with the boys during recess. She is very good at basketball, but the boys won't let her play and the kids call her weird. How can we solve this problem?

2. Tony is an excellent rope jumper. He can do hot potato better than anyone in the school. The boys make fun of him and call him a sissy. What should he do?

3. When Pete's father brings him to school each morning, he kisses him goodby and gives him a big hug. Pete hugs his dad back. The other kids make fun of him. How can we help Pete with this problem?

Chapter 9

COMBATTING PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION THROUGH BOOKS

By Myrna Jones

A rich source of teaching materials in the area of differences and prejudices is provided by children's books written about children who are in some way disabled, or socially, or culturally unique. A comparison between some of the old literature and the new literature indicates a move toward a greater sensitivity about differences. For example, more recent books tend to give more complete multidimensional portrayals of children with special needs, whereas many older books portrayed these children as living a totally handicapped existence. Fortunately, there is also an increasing number of selections available that deal sensitively with cultural and ethnic/racial differences while also helping the reader to discover commonalities among all children.

But can a child's character be shaped by the readings which are selected by the teacher to change attitudes and values? Kimmel (1970) in his review of studies pertinent to this question concludes that children's attitudes can be shaped by the stories they read or hear. Initial negative attitudes toward groups that are different may be influenced through the use of selected readings and a well-planned discussion program. Kimmel does caution, however, that although books may play a significant part in shaping and reshaping children's thinking, the lasting effects of such attitude change remains to be researched.

The following selected bibliography provides literature to address the issues in the preceding chapters. Teachers may find the general references helpful for further literature selections for topics addressed by these chapters and for other topics which are relevant to the individual classroom.

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